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A
CONFUTATION

Of the FIFTH of

Mr. *Moore's* PROPOSITIONS

K OF

Natural and Reveal'd RELIGION,

Which relates to the Doctrine of the

T R I N I T Y.

In a LETTER to a Clergyman.

To which is Added

A LETTER to

Dr. *Waterland.*

L O N D O N,

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T O

The Rev. Mr. J--- F---

S I R,



S you desir'd my Opinion on the Fifth of Mr. Moore's *Propositions of Natural and Revealed Religion*, which relates to the Doctrine of the Trinity, I was willing to examine it thoroughly ; and have sent you the Result of my Examination.

I SHALL preface it by taking notice only of the Conclusion of this Author's Preface, where he takes himself to be so considerable a Writer, as to declare, that *if any Person thinks fit to reply to his Papers, he hopes he shall have no reason to complain, that he writes under Concealment, and without a Name. And he declares once for all, that he shall think that Gentleman beneath his Notice, that is ashamed to set his Name to an Opinion he avows, and would palm upon the World.*

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As an Author may have good Reasons for not publishing his Name, without being at all ashamed of the Opinion he avows; so if I had no other Reason for not putting my Name to these Papers, I should choose not to put it for the Reason here afforded me by this Gentleman, *viz.* that I may be *beneath his Notice*: For I assure you, I have no Desire or Intent to have any thing more to do with him, and so I hope he will keep his Word.

I PROCEED now to the Proposition itself. It is this:

P R O P. V. p. 95.

There are in Scripture divers high Points of Doctrine, transcending humane Understanding, either at first to discover, or, now they are revealed, to demonstrate or comprehend how they can be: yet they are nevertheless worthy of full Credit, relying on the sacred Testimony of infinite Truth.

THIS Proposition, you cannot but see, sufficiently confutes itself: For it is impossible and absurd to suppose, that any high Points

Points of Doctrine should be reveal'd to Men, which humane Understanding cannot comprehend when they are revealed. And nothing is more evident than this Truth, that what cannot be comprehended or understood, cannot possibly be a Matter or Object of Faith, unless we can believe without Ideas, i. e. *believe we know not what*. So that revealing a Doctrine which is incomprehensible when reveal'd is revealing nothing ; because in such a Doctrine there is nothing to be understood, and consequently nothing to be believ'd. The *Resurrection of the Body* is properly a matter of Revelation, because the Truth of it could not be known without it ; but now that it is reveal'd, we easily understand and comprehend how it may be. It may certainly be rais'd by the same divine Power that at first form'd it ; but in what particular manner, and with what particular Form and Properties God will raise it, he hath not thought fit to reveal to us, and therefore he does not require us to believe any thing about *this*. What he has reveal'd we clearly understand, and therefore believe, and nothing more. But to suppose a Proposition to be reveal'd, the very Terms of which are unintelligible, and require another Revelation to explain them ; and without which Explanation it is impossible to form any Idea of the Doctrine contain'd in that Proposition, and consequently to believe

it ; this is to suppose God to have made mere Sounds to be *high Points of Doctrine*, and Matters of Faith, than which nothing can be more absurd, and derogatory to divine Revelation ; the very design of which is, and cannot but be, to make known to us things which are fit and useful for us to know and believe, and which without Revelation we could not have discover'd by our own Reason or Understanding.

LET us now hear what high Points of reveal'd Doctrine, which we cannot comprehend *how they can be*, are the Subject of our Author's Proposition. *Of this nature* (says he) *we may esteem the Doctrine of the Trinity, and may fully believe that tho' there is and can be but one God, yet the divine Nature equally belongs to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in a way which the shallow Reason of Man may vindicate from the absurd Character of Impossibility and Contradiction ; which it can never be prov'd to be, till we have a direct Idea of the divine Nature and Perfections, and wherein the Unity of an omnipresent Spirit consists ; or how the divine Essence in Earth and in Heaven, within and without the Universe, can be the same individual Substance.*

To this I answer, 1st, This Proposition, *that there is and can be but one God, and yet that*

that the one divine Nature equally belongs to *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, is a Proposition which is not reveal'd in the Scriptures; and if it was reveal'd, the Terms of it are utterly unintelligible, and cannot be understood unless they are explain'd by Revelation also; and if they are explain'd, it will be easy to understand what is meant by them, and thereby easy to know whether this Proposition is, or is possible to be, true. The Terms then, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, as suppos'd to exist and to have the divine Nature of the one God equally belonging to them, must necessarily be understood either of *three Properties or Attributes* of the one divine Nature, Substance, or God; or of *three Persons, or intelligent Agents*, who have equally belonging to them the *one divine Nature*, and are the *one God*. Now as there are only these two possible Explications of the Terms of the Proposition, there is nothing in either of them which it is not easy to understand or comprehend. If our Author means, that *Father, Son and Holy Ghost* are mere Modes or Properties of the *one God*, and if he could prove this from Scripture, then the Scripture would teach no more than what a *Deist* believes without Revelation. But he knows, and it is evident, that the *Father, Son and Holy Ghost* are always spoken of in Scripture, not as *Modes* of Existence, or mere divine Attributes, but as existing

isting intelligent Agents, *i. e.* as *real Persons*. So that it remains only to be consider'd, whether the Doctrine of this Author's Proposition, according to the latter Explanation of the Names *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, as meaning intelligent Agents or Persons, and suppos'd to have the one divine Nature equally belonging to them, and to be the *one God*, is reveal'd in Scripture, or is, or can possibly be, true. Now if it is immediately self-destructive, and contradictory to the *Unity of God*, with which it is pretended to be consistent; then it is certain that it is not revealed, and neither is, or is possible to be, true. But it is as certain and demonstrative as any Proposition in *Euclid*, that the divine Nature, which is unoriginated and self-existent, cannot belong to more than one Person or Agent, without inferring more than one self-existent Agent or Person, that is, more than *one God*; which is contradictory to, and fundamentally destructive of, the first and principal Article of all Religion, both natural and reveal'd, *viz.* the *Unity of God*. There is no way wherein this can possibly be conceiv'd otherwise, if this Author will allow that we have, or can have, any Idea or Knowledge of God; and so of what is meant by *one God*, or *three Gods*. This is as evident as any intuitive Truth whatsoever. We could not be capable of Religion or the Worship of God at all, if we have
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not an Idea or true Conception of his Being and Perfections. Without having a Knowledge of God, we can neither believe in him, or worship him ; unless we can *believe we know not what*, and *worship we know not what*. But we know what we worship, and therefore have a direct and true Idea of the *Existence, Unity and Perfections* of God, as clear as is the Idea of any of our own Properties, or of the Unity of our own Souls.

2dly, THE *Unity* of every Thing consists in being only what it is, and not another Thing : As *one Peter, one James, one John*, one Person or Agent, and not more than one. This is intuitive. And the Unity of an omnipresent Substance, or Spirit, consists in a simple uniform infinite Existence, without a Possibility of Separation of Parts. This is so far from being above Reason, that it is demonstrative by Reason : As a Trinity of three self-existent Agents, or Persons, is also so far from being above Reason, that it is demonstratively *Tritheism*. That which is infinite may as easily be prov'd to be so, as that which is finite ; and tho' we cannot in the Imagination comprehend what is infinite, (nor in many Cases what is finite) yet we can demonstrate it by Reason, and so conceive it in the Intellect, and clearly understand it. And as to the Mode of Existence,

tence, we know just as much of infinite as of finite Existence : We know as well how God exists, as how we ourselves exist. We know that he is underiv'd, and that we ourselves are created ; and are as sure, that there is and can be but *one* underived Being, Agent, Person, or God, as that there is or may be more than one created Being, Agent, or Man. So that when we speak of that which is infinite we speak of what we understand, as well as when we speak of that which is finite. Transubstantiation (*p.* 97.) is not a greater Contradiction to our Senses, than a Trinity of three self-existent Agents or Persons is to our Reason, and to the Unity of God ; nor is so demonstratively contradictory in itself. And whether we suppose the divine Persons to be necessarily existent, or to be deriv'd, three necessarily existent intelligent Beings, Agents, Persons or Gods, can no more be one and the same necessarily existent intelligent Being, Agent, Person, or God, than *two* deriv'd and *one* underiv'd intelligent Being, Agent, or Person, can be one and the same intelligent Being, Agent, Person or God. As this is demonstrative by Reason, Revelation can no more be pretended for it, or possibly support it, than it can the plainest Contradiction or Impossibility. But we shall see presently that Revelation is so far from teaching the Doctrine of our Author, that it teacheth the direct contrary, *viz.* that
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there is but one God, even the Father, supreme over all, in Distinction to the Son the Mediator, and his Spirit, the Comforter, whom He *sent*, and who receiv'd from him all that divine Power and Authority which they exercise by his *Will* and *Appointment* in the Gospel-Dispensation. He pretends (*p. 99.*) that he does not believe without Ideas, but only that the Modus of his Doctrine is beyond our Ideas. To believe three distinct Persons to be each necessarily-existent, and the supreme God, and yet to be one God, is not indeed believing without Ideas, or what is above our Ideas ; but is pretending (what is really impossible) to believe in Contradiction to the clearest Ideas ; just as the *Papists* do who pretend to believe *Transubstantiation*. We do not want then to have a Perception of the Modus, or Manner, of his Doctrine, but to have it clear'd from the plainest Contradiction. For let this Author take what Notion he pleases of a divine Person, if he does but suppose it something existent, and intelligent Substance, three such Persons which are distinct, and are not one the other, and are each infinite self-existent intelligent Substance, (if three such could exist) cannot possibly be the same infinite self-existent intelligent Substance, any more than *three* in Number can be but *one* in Number : And let these Persons be ever so closely united, (if it was possible for three

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Infinities of the same Nature really to exist, and to be united) yet they would be as much three, distinct in Substance, Agency, and Deity, as if not united ; they would be *three united supreme Gods*. All his metaphysical Reasoning therefore, which in Defence of his Proposition he useth to puzzle and perplex a plain Scripture-Doctrine, is vain and useless ; and all the weak Pretences of it have been often and fully * consider'd, and shewn to be ungrounded and nothing to the Purpose. I will not therefore trouble or detain you with this Gentleman's mere Reveries of Imagination, which he indulges thro' several Pages ; but having premis'd thus much, I will proceed to examine what he has to alledge from Scripture in Defence of his Doctrine of the Trinity, which is, that *there are three (Persons,) to whom the Nature as well as Name, the Attributes or essential Perfections of the one God belong, whom the Scripture speaks of, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. He adds, *the Sameness in Substance, or Equality in Power and Glory of these three Persons, of Father and Son particularly, is grounded on the same Perfections ; the same Works, and the same Honour and Worship being ascrib'd, or requir'd to be render'd, to both*, p. 112, 113.

* See a Book entitul'd, *The Existence and Unity of God prov'd from his Nature and Attributes*, and the Defence of it ; both by Mr. Jackson.

I observe this Author seems doubtful of his being able to prove particularly the Sameness of Substance, and Equality of Power and Glory in the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son ; and to allow (*p.* 187) that the Name *God* is not ascrib'd to him in Scripture. And before he proceeds to the Proofs of his own Notion, he endeavours to shew that Notion of the Trinity to be indefensible, which was the unanimous Doctrine of the primitive Church, namely, *that the divine Nature of Christ was eternally (or before the Ages of the World) deriv'd by the Power and Will of the Father, p.* 114. On this Supposition, he says, *either it must be from a Substance distinct from God the Father, or else from the Father's own Essence, or from nothing. If out of a distinct Substance from God the Father, then that Substance must be before him ; and so he could not be from Eternity.* The same Reason, if it is any, holds against the Son's Eternity, altho' he was begotten or deriv'd out of the Father's Substance ; for so, according to his Reasoning, this Substance must be before him ; and it is the same, whether he was deriv'd by *Necessity* or *Will*, since God, as a *voluntary* Cause, or Agent, is as eternal as if he was a *necessary* Cause ; and therefore could by a voluntary Derivation give eternal Existence to the Son, whatever his Substance is, whether that of the Father, or a distinct

Substance, as well as if he existed by *necessary* Derivation. And the Result of this Author's Notion of the Son's *Generation* can only consistently be, that he was not deriv'd or begotten, either in Time or from Eternity, but is the Father's Substance itself underiv'd and unbegotten. This is the Effect of bad Metaphysicks, which are inconsistent with true natural Philosophy. It is then evident that the Son, if deriv'd or begotten, must be essentially distinct from him who is underiv'd and unbegotten : His Nature and Perfections, if deriv'd, must be essentially different from the underiv'd Nature and Perfections of the Father. But it does not at all follow from the Generation or Derivation of the Son by the *Will* of the Father, that he is not, or may not be, *eternal* ; because God who is necessarily eternal can act *always* : And this necessarily follows from his having eternal active Power, which he could not have, if he could not exert that Power and act. A Power from Eternity, which cannot be exerted from Eternity, is no more an eternal Power, than a Power from Time, which cannot be exerted in Time, is a temporary Power : For that Power which cannot be exerted is no Power at all ; and a Power from Eternity of creating the Universe in Time (which is all this Author allows, p. 117) is not an eternal but only a temporary Power. So that an eternal Creation,

tion, Production, or Derivation, as being the Exertion of eternal Power, or the Act of an eternal Agent, has no Difficulty in it ; and these imply no more than being *Effects* of a *Cause*, and not necessarily existent, or self-originated ; but they imply nothing like Beginning of Existence in a particular limited Time. This Gentleman had better have let Metaphysics alone, and confin'd his Proofs to Scripture, to which he comes p. 121. and there argues for his Notion of the supreme Divinity of the Son of God, from its being said in the Scripture, that *God created all Things by him.* Either, says he, *he was no more than the Instrument or Occasion of the World's Production, or else, he was a true, proper, physical Cause of it.* To affirm him to be no more than an Instrument, is to make him no more a proper Creator of the World, than the Prophets and Apostles were the true physical Causes of those Miracles, which were only the *Effects* of the divine Power. He should have concluded, *therefore he is a proper Creator of the World, therefore he is the supreme God and Maker of all Things*, which is what he means to conclude ; but instead of so doing, he amuses his Reader with a long Train of philosophical instead of scriptural Arguments for about ten Pages together, which are nothing to the Purpose.

To

To what is offer'd above, I answer: The Scripture saying, *that God created all Things by Jesus Christ*, shews in the Nature of the Expression, as well as the Thing itself, that God was the *original Cause* and *supreme Creator*, and *Christ* the *secondary* and *subordinate Agent* in the Work of Creation; and whether he acted as the instrumental Cause only, or by a creative Power deriv'd to him from God, and exercis'd by God's *Will* and *Command*, it is all one as to the Scripture-Doctrine of the Creation of all Things from God (originally) by the Ministration of *Jesus Christ*. When it is said, (*Act. xix. 11.*) *God wrought special Miracles by the Hands of Paul*; we think it, notwithstanding, proper to say, that *Paul* was a Worker of Miracles, because he acted in the doing of them; as the Prophets also did, in delivering the Prophecies which God reveal'd by them. Yet it is observable that the Scripture never says that *Christ made the World*, or styles him *Creator*, but always distinguisheth his Power from that of the supreme God and Maker of all Things, by saying, that *God created all Things by (through) Jesus Christ*; *i. e.* by his ministerial Agency. Whether *Christ* had a *creative Power* deriv'd to him from God, or not, we cannot be sure, because the Scripture is silent about it; but we may with Certainty conclude, that God would not do his greatest Work by the meanest Instrument (by a
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Worm, as this Author indecently speaks, p. 122.) but by the most excellent of all created or deriv'd Beings. And as God intended that the World which he created by *Christ* should be *his*, and be govern'd by him, we may be sure that he has endued him with a Power and Knowledge proportionate to, and sufficient for, this great Office. How knows this Author, then, but that God himself (as the Ancients thought) having created the Matter or Substance of which Things consist, gave his Son, the *Word*, the Power of framing the whole Creation? Or that he may be of a Nature so far excellent and powerful above the whole Creation, visible and invisible, as to have originally deriv'd to him, with his Existence, the Power of Creation itself? His Objection to this is, that the World could not be created by a Being *less* than the supreme God himself; because every Person who is not the infinite supreme God must be infinitely below him; and so it follows, he thinks, on this Supposition of the World's being created by any Person who is not the supreme God, *that God might enable his Creatures, tho' infinitely inferior to himself in their Powers, to do every Thing that he himself can do: For, what can he do more than create this and an indefinite number of Worlds besides it?* p. 125. Does this Gentleman think, then, that the infinite Power of the supreme God is all exerted and exhausted in the
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Creation of this or any other finite System of Beings? Can any thing be more absurd than this Supposition? Surely, then, since a finite and limited Power is proportionate to a finite Creation, it might be effected by a finite Agent: And supposing an infinite almighty Power necessary for the original Production of things into Existence, yet the *framing, ordering, and governing* these things, when produc'd into Existence, may, no doubt, by the Co-operation of God [which perhaps necessarily concurs with the Acts of every Agent] be proportionate to the natural Powers of a created Being. There is no Absurdity or Difficulty in this. And even the Supposition of a Power of creating things from Non-existence, deriv'd or communicated from God to another Being, is far from making that Being *equal* to him in Power from whom he derived all his Power. This is evident at first Sight. But yet the Scripture-Revelation seems to intimate to us, that whatever Powers are derived to the Son of God, and manifested by him, under God, in the Creation and Government of the World the greatest of these are not the greatest that God can and will manifest; and that as there must be divine Powers which are incommunicable to every derived or originated Being, so God may have reserved in his own Power many Effects and Illustrations of his almighty Godhead, Power, and other Perfections,

fections, to be manifested by himself in Worlds to come, when he, as God supreme over all, *shall be all in all*. But the Works of Creation, whoever was the immediate and subordinate Agent, and whether he acted by God's Power exerted in and by him, or by his own natural Power, equally display (tho' this Author is *at a loss to comprehend it*, p. 129.) *the eternal Power and Godhead* of the original supreme Creator: Because they must be the Effect of the Power of God himself immediately, or of a ministerial Agent empower'd by him, and deriv'd from him. So that either way, the System of created things manifests *God's eternal Power and Godhead*; nothing is plainer, or easier to comprehend.

NEXT, p. 130. he thinks it *contrary to Reason, as well as Scripture*, that the Son, if derived, should be an Object of *religious Adoration*. He says, *If the Son of God has not supreme but delegated Perfections, he can claim only that religious Worship which has the same Proportion to the Worship of the supreme God, as a Creature to its Creator*. This Gentleman cannot distinguish between the supreme un-originated God, and the Creature whom God created by Jesus Christ. He perpetually talks as if he was at a loss to comprehend the Difference; and therefore supposes that saying Christ is *begotten*, is the same as making him *a Creature*, because this shews that he is not the unbegotten supreme God.

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It must be evident to every one who has read and considered the Scriptures carefully and impartially, and who believes the Unity of God, that the Son hath not supreme undervived Perfections; and that he hath receiv'd both his Nature and Perfections (how divine soever they are) by Derivation from the one God the Father, supreme over all, by whom he is appointed *Mediator*, and who hath *commanded* him to be worshipped as that Person to whom he hath *given* and *committed* the Power of *Judgment*. Is not all the Worship then, that can consistently with *Reason* and *Scripture* be given to the Son, plainly *mediatorial*? Is it not the Worship of him who is *exalted* by God, and *commanded* to be worshipped as *Lord*, to the *Glory of God the Father*? Is not this Acknowledgment of his invisible Power and Dominion over all, tho' *given* him, a *religious Adoration*; or is it only an *empty ceremonious Compliment*, according to this Author, *p. 131.* because it redounds ultimately to the Glory of *the one God and Father of all, who is supreme over all*?

2dly, THUS worshipping Christ as Mediator, and by the Appointment and Command of God the Father, and finally to his Glory, is so far (as this Author weakly alledges, *p. 131.*) from taking away any Part of the *Glory* or *Worship* due to the supreme God, that it is an immediate Acknowledgment of
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of the supreme incommunicable Worship, which is due to the one God the Father only; to whom all Worship is primarily and originally due, and *besides whom* no Worship is or can be due to any other, without his exprefs Command and Appointment. And tho' God undoubtedly may (without diminishing the least of that Glory which is peculiarly due to himself) command one to be worship'd in Subordination to himself, to whom he hath *committed* a divine invisible Dominion and Power; yet it is the greatest Absurdity possible, to suppose (with this Author) that God might as well *command* a Creature or a Person deriv'd from him, and who is invested by him with all the Authority which he hath, or can exercise, to be worship'd equally with himself; or to have that Adoration and Worship paid to him, which is and can be only due to the supreme God. This Glory God cannot give to any other Person whatsoever; and every Part or Degree of religious Worship, which is or can be rightly paid to any other Person, is primarily and ultimately *his*, and given by his *Command* only; nor can possibly depend on, or be essential to, any deriv'd Nature or Perfections. Nothing is more evident, if Men would open their Eyes to *Scripture* and *Reason*. Therefore all Idolatry consists, not in worshipping more than one supreme God, but in giving by mere Imagination, and without knowing what we worship, that which

peculiarly belongs to God only to give, *viz.* any religious Adoration to other Persons besides the supreme God, without his express *Command* for so doing. This is the Reason we are not to worship *Saints* and *Angels*, tho' we are assur'd of their Existence and Being with God ; and this is the Reason why we worship Christ. And no doubt we might worship any Creature, if God commanded it ; but to suppose him, as this Author argues hence, to command us to worship inanimate Creatures, who are mere Instruments of his Providence, is to be as stupid and senseless as they are. It is strange this Gentleman cannot see where the Fault of the *Galatians* lay, p. 132, 133. *in doing Service*, or paying Worship, *to them who by Nature are no Gods*, *Gal. iv. 8.* Nature taught them the Worship of the one supreme self-existent God, and of no other besides him ; and the *Galatians* and other Heathens had no Authority or Command from him, who is *by Nature God*, and has an unquestionable Right to be worship'd accordingly, to do religious Service to any other Person or Being : They are therefore justly blam'd, because instead of the one true God, who is *by Nature* really and truly God ; they serv'd and worship'd other Beings, who by Nature are not Gods ; are neither supreme self-existent Beings, nor have any real or true divine Power or Authority committed to them from the supreme God, over those who worship'd them. The *Antithesis*
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(as v. 9. shews) is between the Heathen Idols, and the one true God and Father of all ; between the *many Gods* who are no Gods *by Nature*, or in Truth and Reality, at all, and the one supreme God declar'd in the Christian Revelation, who alone is God by an underiv'd supreme Power and Dominion over all. And as the Worship of Christ is not infer'd from this Text, so it is never in Scripture founded on his original Nature and Perfections at all, or on his being *by Nature God*, i. e. the supreme self-existent God ; but it is always founded on that Authority, which is committed to him from him who is *by Nature God*, and who has *commanded all Men to honour the Son, as they honour the Father*: That is plainly, as they *honour the Father* as being, by original underiv'd Right, the supreme Judge of Mankind ; so by his Appointment and Will they are to *honour the Son* as his Delegate, to whom he hath committed this Judgment, and made him *the Judge both of Quick and Dead*, Acts x. 42. This is our Lord's own Doctrine, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do : For what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth.—For as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickeneth them ; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no Man, but*
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*hath committed all Judgment to the Son ; that all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. John v. 19—23. All that our Author farther offers on this Point, to p. 142, is most absurd Reasoning. What greater Sign (p. 135.) could the Jews have requir'd of our Saviour's divine Mission, than that which he shew'd by the Miracles which he wrought, and to which he constantly appeals, and in the very Case before us. I can of my own self, (says our Lord) do nothing ; as I hear I judge, and my Judgment is just ; because I seek not my own Will, but the Will of the Father who hath sent me.--- The Works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same Works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me. John v. 30, 36. Our Saviour, you see, proves his Claim of being honoured, as him who was sent and appointed by God his Father to be the Judge of Men, from the Works which the Father had given him to finish ; and which he did as the Evidence that the Father had sent him. He knew the Jews could never object their Law (as they never pretended to do, tho' our Author thinks they certainly would have done, p. 137, 138.) against his being honour'd as the *Messias*, to whom the Law itself directed them ; if he could but convince them by his Miracles that he was the Christ. The Law, as our Saviour*

Saviour represents it *Mat. iv. 10, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, could never be violated by him ; unless he had either taught the Worship of another *Lord God*, distinct from the God of the *Jews* ; or the Worship of *strange Gods*, forbidden in the Law to be worship'd. But as the *Jews* knew that our Saviour never pretended himself to be either the *God of Israel*, or another distinct *Lord God* ; or taught the Worship of any other God but the God of *Israel*, from whom he declar'd himself to be *sent*, and to be his Son, thereby intimating to them that he was the *Messias* ; whatever Worship was due to the *Messias* he must have a Right to, from them who were convinc'd that he was so. But in declaring the Honour which was due to him, as being *given* him from God the Father who *sent* him, he neither *enjoin'd* them to *give supreme or subordinate Worship to another God*, as this Author imagines (*p. 137.*) those whom he opposeth to teach ; or to worship himself, the *Messias*, as being the supreme God : But he taught all his Disciples to pray to (the one God) *the Father in his Name*, *John xvi. 23, 24, 26.* and he commanded them to direct all their Prayers to God the Father : *When ye pray say, Our Father &c. Luke xi. 2.* Where, as a learned * *Ancient* observes, *Christ does not teach his Disciples to pray to himself, but to the Father,*

* *Orig. de Orat. Sect. 44.*

Father, to whom also he himself pray'd. Nor does our Saviour throughout the Gospels ever teach us to pray to himself ; or the Apostles in their Epistles ever pray to him, or direct Christians to invoke him in their Prayers. The true Christian Worship undoubtedly is to worship by *Supplication, Thanksgiving, and Prayer*, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *in his Name*, whom God sent to be the *Mediator between God and Man* ; and to whom, as an Assurance of our being heard and accepted thro' him, God hath *given all Power, both in Heaven and Earth*. Can any thing therefore be plainer, unless Men are resolv'd to preach another Gospel, than that the Honour and Worship of Christ commanded in his Gospel is *mediatorial and subordinate* ; which his own Declaration of every Thing he has being *given* him evidently (as this Author sees and owns, *p. 141.*) implies ? The Truth is ; to worship Christ is no other than primarily and ultimately to worship God the Father in a thankful Acknowledgment of, and dutiful Subjection to, that Authority which he hath given to his Son, whom he hath made *both Lord and Christ*. Acts ii. 36. Our Author cites several Texts without at all knowing what they mean, *viz. that all the Angels of God are commanded to worship the Son of God, Heb. i. 6. That all must honour the Son, as they honour the Father, John v. 23. That every Knee must bow to him,*

him, Phil. ii. 10. and that *Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power*, are to be ascrib'd to him *for ever and ever*, Rev. v. 12, 13. If this Gentleman understood these Texts, he would be asham'd to urge them to prove that *the Worship of the Son of God must be the same with the Father's, and founded on the same Claim of true Divinity*, p. 143. by which he means necessarily-existent, independent, and supreme Nature and Perfections, p. 177. Would he have attended to the Verses immediately preceeding and following one of those he cites, he might easily have seen that the Worship of the Son of God is not the same with the Father's, or founded upon the same Claim of Divinity. The Apostle says (*Phil. ii. 9.*) that *God hath highly exalted Christ, &c.* And the Reason or Ground of his high Exaltation is given in *ver. 6, 7, 8, viz.* Christ, when he was *in the Form of God, (being the Brightness of his Glory, and express Image of his Person,* as it is explain'd *Heb. i. 3.*) did not claim the *divine Honour*, (or to be *ἰσα θεῷ*) to which he was afterwards exalted, or think it was to be obtain'd without Trouble, as if it was (*ἀπαγμὸν, εὖρεμα, ἐργασίον*) a *fortuitous Prize*, found and gain'd without Difficulty, as *Isidore of Pelusium* rightly *explains it: But as he knew that God had appointed that *without shedding of Blood there should be no Remission of Sins*, Heb. ix. 22. there-

* Epist. lib. 4. Epist. 22.

fore to obtain this our Reconciliation with God, and to be the Author of our Salvation, he condescended to our human State, and appear'd not in the *Form of God* (this he laid aside, and emptied himself of) but in the *Form of a Servant, and Fashion of a Man*; and in our Nature humbled himself, and *became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross*, ver. 6, 7, 8. And that this is the Ground of his Honour and Worship the Apostle declares, saying, *Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow,——and every Tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father*, ver. 9, 10, 11. Is this the same Worship, and founded on the same Claim, with the Worship of God the Father? Is the Worship of God the Father founded on his being EXALTED by another Person on account of his Humiliation and Obedience to that Person, and having a Name GIVEN him, or Dominion over all Things both in *Heaven, and Earth, and under the Earth*; that is, over Angels, and over Men both the quick and dead, who are made subject to him? Could any Thing more clearly and fully set forth the distinct Claim or Foundation of the Worship of God the Father, and the Son, than what the Apostle hath here said? Is it not evident that the Worship of the Father is founded on his original, independent,

dent, underiv'd Sovereignty, or Dominion over all ; and claim'd from us by our Obligation of confessing it in our Addresses to him ? And is it not as evident that the Worship of the Son is founded on that Honour to which he is exalted, and on that Authority which God hath given him, and due from us by our Acknowledgment of it, and Subjection to it, finally *to the Glory of God the Father ?*

THUS nothing is more plain and consistent, than the distinct Honour and Worship which we are taught to pay to God the Father, and the Son ; and which ought never to be confounded in our religious Services : Left while we aim to be wise above what is written, and vainly pretend to honour God and his Christ by an uncommanded Service, *we worship we know not what ;* and instead of honouring *the Son*, really dishonour both *the Father, and also the Son*, whom he sent. In praying to the Father *through the Son, or in his Name*, humbly and thankfully confessing him to be our Lord and Saviour, we cannot possibly err or offend : And this is giving to the Son all the religious Honour and Worship that is commanded in the Gospel-Revelation to be given to him ; or that he himself has taught us to give. God hath *exalted him to his own Right-Hand, placed him on his Throne, and given him all Power both in Heaven and Earth ;* therefore both

Angels and Men are commanded to ascribe Honour, Glory, and Power to the Lamb that was slain (and who sitteth on the Throne of God, Rev. v. 6. and for the suffering of Death is crowned with Glory and Honour, Heb. ii. 9.) for ever and ever. Rev. v. 12, 13.

WHAT this Author next pretends is very extraordinary indeed. He says, (p. 143.) *If we really worship the Son of God with inferior Worship, we can never be said to worship the Father, through him, to whom we cannot give subordinate Worship.* As if, without the greatest Absurdity and Solecism, we could be said to worship God *through* Christ the Son of God, if he, *through* whom God is worshipped, is himself the supreme God : Or as if applying to him as *Mediator* could be *supreme* Worship, or the Worship of the *supreme* God. And yet surely the Confession of Christ's Authority and Mediation, and worshipping him as *Lord, to the Glory of God the Father*, cannot with the least Appearance of Reason be called giving *subordinate Worship* to the supreme God, the Father. On the direct contrary, the giving to God the Father primarily and finally the Glory of that subordinate Worship which we pay to the Son, as exalted by him, and made by his Appointment our *Mediator* and *Judge*, is giving proper and supreme Worship to God the Father, and such as is incommunicable to the Son, or to any other Person,

Person, but only *to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. When this Gentleman considers this carefully, he will be surprized at the Weakness of his own Reasoning, p. 143, 144.

THE next Error with which he chargeth those who hold the Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity is, *their insinuating that Christ only assumed an humane Body without an humane Soul; which Opinion (he thinks) is contrary to several Texts of Scripture which call him the Son of Man, and inform us, that in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, Heb. ii. 17. that he grew in Knowledge as well as Stature, Luke ii. 52. which cannot without the utmost Absurdity be affirmed of the divine Nature of the Son of God; p. 144, 145.* This Gentleman's Talent, we have seen, does not lie in explaining Scripture; he is also so unlucky as to cite in favour of his own Scheme Texts that are full against it. Had the Scriptures spoken always of Christ as being *the Son of Man*, without any Explication of the Sense in which they so call him, we might well have concluded that he was *a mere Man*. But it clearly appears from several Texts particularly, and from the whole Tenour of Scripture in general, that Christ is neither a mere Man, nor two distinct Persons, one *humane*, and one *divine*. The Scriptures therefore on one hand never teach that Christ
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took an *humane Soul*, without which he could not be an *humane Person*, tho' he might properly be a *Man*; and do teach on the other hand, that what in him *was made Flesh*, and *was born of a Woman*, and *was made Man*, was not an *humane Soul*, but the *divine Word*; and so, that Christ was neither two Persons, nor a mere humane Person, but a divine Person, *the Word made Flesh*, and being born of humane Flesh and Blood Was a *Man*, and properly called *the Son of Man*, as being of humane Seed, and having an humane Body. And this our Author might have seen and infer'd from the Text of the *Hebrews*, which he produceth for the direct contrary. It is there said, *ver. 14. Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise partook of the same: For verily (ver. 16.) he took not on him the (Nature of) Angels, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham. Wherefore, as it follows, in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren in his humane Nature, that by taking a Body with its Affections, he might be found, (as St. Paul speaks, Phil. ii. 7, 8.) in the Form of a Servant, and Fashion of a Man, and thereby be capable of suffering Death for our Redemption. This is the Drift and Scope of the Argument which the Author of the Epistle is upon. And the Scripture is uniform throughout in the Doctrine of Christ's Incarnation. The Word was made Flesh,*
says

says St. *John* i. 14. *Wherefore, when he cometh into the World, he saith, a Body hast thou prepar'd me, Heb. x. 5.* And sure there can be no Difficulty to a reasonable Man to believe that that divine Person, who we are assur'd from Scripture *emptied himself of the Form of God*, and instead of dwelling in the Brightness of God's Glory condescended to take and dwell in an humane Body, and so to become *Man*, that he might be capable of suffering for Man's Redemption, there can be, I say, no Difficulty in believing that this Person, in Consequence of this *Exinanition*, might properly be said *to encrease in Wisdom*, as well as *in Age and Body*; the Wisdom of the *divine Word* manifesting itself by Degrees, as the Body *encreas'd in Stature*.

THIS indeed was a Mystery that Angels *desir'd to look into*, 1 Pet. i. 12. It being past their Comprehension, how so glorious and divine a Person as the *Word* should possibly be *emptied* of his Glory and other Perfections (tho' but for a while) so far as to be made Flesh, and become capable of humane Sufferings. This therefore was a proper Subject for the Gospel-Revelation, wherein the Greatness of God's Power is manifested in the *Mission* and *Incarnation* of his Son. But the Scripture never teaching or intimating that Christ took a *Soul* as well as a *Body*; and always speaking of him as one
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Person, called either *Son of Man*, or *Son of God* ; we must conclude that the *Cerinthian* Doctrine of *two Persons* in Christ, viz. *Christ the Word*, and an *humane Soul*, has no Foundation in Scripture ; and it is also evident, that no Union can make a divine and humane *Person* to be *one Person*, any more than it can make *two* humane Souls or *Persons* to be *one Soul* or *one Person*. This is not possible to be conceiv'd without destroying the personal Existence and Nature of the one, or of the other ; and the Heresy of *Cerintbus* or *Eutyebes* is the unavoidable Consequence of this Notion. The humane Soul is a *Person*, whether united to the Body, or separated from it ; but it does not constitute a *Man*, (which is a compound Name) without being in Union with an humane Body, from whence it has the Appellation of *Man*. In which Respect we only consider a Body endued with a Soul or intelligent Agent, without knowing or considering the distinct Nature of the Soul united to it. And this is the Reason why Angels, when they appear in human Form, are in Scripture stil'd *Men*. This our Author takes notice of (*p.* 155.) and has nothing to reply to shew the Disparity of the Case, but the very weak Pretence that they are not said to be like us in all Things, as the Son of God is said to be ; which is plainly nothing to the Purpose of shewing (which is the Point in hand) that an Angel or Spirit superior to a mere humane

humane Soul, when appearing in humane Form, may not properly be call'd a *Man*; but only shews that Angels were not *made Flesh*, or were not really *incarnate*, as the Son of God was: And his whole Reasoning from *p. 145* to *p. 157.* is mere empty Harangue built on a Supposition of the Truth of an unreasonable Hypothesis, in Contradiction to the whole Tenor of Revelation.

THE next Argument which this Gentleman alledges for his Notion of the Trinity is (*p. 157.*) *The Scriptures*, he says, *ascribe the same Names, Titles, Attributes, and Perfections to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*: Which, after another Harangue of mere Words for five Pages, he proceeds to give an Instance of, in an Angel *appearing* and *speaking* in the *Name of God*, the *supreme Jehova*; and on this Account having the Title of *Lord and God*, as being the *Angel* and Representative of the most high God. *He presumes*, (*p. 162.*) *that it is the Sense of many of the Churches of Christ*, that this Angel *was the Messias*; whence he concludes that Christ must be the *supreme God*, (*p. 163.*) But did the primitive Churches of Christ, who believ'd this Angel was the Messias, ever draw such a Conclusion? Or is it possible for such a Conclusion to be drawn by Reason? Had this Author look'd into the Writings of the primitive Christians, he might have seen that as it was their un-

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nimous Doctrine, that the Angel who *appear'd* and *convers'd* with *Adam*, the *Patriarchs*, and *Moses*, was Christ the Son of God, *call'd* also the *Angel of the Covenant*, and of *God's Presence*; so it was no less their unanimous Doctrine founded both on Scripture and Reason, that it was not *the supreme God* himself who *appear'd* and *spake*, but another Person who was the *Minister* and *Representative* of the supreme God, and therefore is stil'd *his Angel*: And that it is *impossible* in itself, and *impious* to believe, that the supreme God (ὁ Θεὸς τῶ ἑλων) could be an *Angel*. Hence they concluded that this Angel, stil'd *Lord* and *God*, was the Son of God himself acting *in the Name*, and *by the Authority*, of God the Father, the one supreme God over all. This is well known to be the constant invariable Sense of the Church of Christ, in the first and purest Ages. Yet in Contradiction to their Sense, and to Scripture and Reason, this Author alledges the Texts *Exod.* vi. 3. and iii. 14. wherein it is said, God told *Moses* that *he appear'd to Abraham by the Name of God Almighty*; and *God said unto Moses I AM that I AM*; and *he said, thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you* p. 163. Whence he argues (p. 164.) that *all these Words cannot be spoken by the Angel of the Covenant, or the Son of God in the Name or by the Authority of his Father, or as his Representative: For 'tis not the Voice of*

of an Angel, but of the Lord, or Jehova, who spake to Moses in his own Name, and not in the Person of another. And he cannot comprehend how a Creature can represent his Creator. To this the Answer is obvious: That God the supreme Jehova did not appear and speak in his own Person, but by an Angel, to Moses, is evident from the Text of Exod. vi. 2 where it is said, and the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him, &c. And therefore when the Lord is said to speak, it is always to be understood, that he spake by his Angel. And it is no less evident, that it was an Angel who appear'd and convers'd with Abraham in the Name of the Lord Jehova. The Texts cited by himself, and many others, shew this. So that he must either prove that the Lord Jehova, the supreme God himself, can be an Angel, and appear and speak, which is the grossest Absurdity; or that the Angel, whoever he was, who minister'd to the Lord Jehova, was not the supreme God; but only was the Representative, and spake in the Name, and acted by the Authority, of the supreme God.

BUT as the supreme God cannot possibly be the Angel or Minister of another, so we are expressly taught in the Gospel-Revelation, that he is absolutely *invisible*; and can neither be *seen* or appear under any visible Form; or *his Voice be heard*. 1 Tim. i. 17. Heb. xi. 27. Job. i. 18. v. 37. vi. 46. 1 Job. iv. 12. So
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that this Author has neither attended to the plain and exprefs Declarations of Scripture, nor to the Reason of Things, in supposing that the Lord *Jehova* himself *appear'd* and *spake* to *Moses*. But he cannot comprehend how a Creature can represent his Creator; that is, he cannot conceive how an Angel should represent the supreme God, and be call'd by his Name, as being his immediate Minister, and appearing in his Person, and acting by his Authority; tho' nothing is more easy to comprehend, and more plainly declar'd in Scripture: But yet he thinks he can comprehend what is far more incomprehensible, and an absolute Impossibility and Absurdity, namely, that the *supreme* God may be an *Angel*; and may *appear*, and his *Voice* be *heard*. An Heathen without Revelation would teach him that God is essentially *invisible*, as the Scriptures testify. But God undoubtedly may be represented by whomsoever of his Creatures he pleaseth; by his Angels, or by mere Men. He was represented by *Moses* to the *Jews*, in delivering by him his Law to that People; and by the Prophets, in delivering by them the Predictions of his Will and Providence. And God's being represented and making his Will known by his Creatures is as easy to be understood, as the Representation of a King by one of his Subjects. For it is not the metaphysical Nature and Perfections of God which are or can be represented, but his *Power* and *Knowledge* relative to us; which

which *Prophecy* and *Miracles*, whether deliver'd and done by Angels or Men, properly represent. And in this respect every Person or Being is a proper Representative of God, whom he shall appoint to be so. The primitive Christians constantly believ'd that the supreme God, the Father, being absolutely *im-mense*, could not possibly *appear* or be *seen*, *ascend* or *descend*; and therefore it was their Doctrine, that the Angel appearing and speaking in his Name was the (*λογος*) *Word* or Son of God. But we do not read that the Angel who represented God calls himself (as our Author says, p. 165) *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; or by the Title, *I AM that I AM*. This is a plain Mistake: And in the Texts alledg'd for this Purpose it is not written, the Angel said, *I am the God of Abraham*, or *I AM that I AM*; but that the *Lord Jehova* said, or that *God* said, [*viz.* by his Angel] *I am the God of Abraham, &c.* and *I AM that I AM*. These are the Titles of the one supreme God which he made known to *Moses* by his Angel, and which the Gospel assures us were spoken of God, the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who is the *God of Israel*. *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our Fathers, hath glorify'd his Son Jesus*, *Act. iii. 13.*

IT is the Idiom of Scripture thus to represent God *appearing* and *speaking* by his Angels, as earthly Kings do by their Embassadors.

Thus

Thus what is said by the Messengers of *Ben-hadad*, King of *Syria*, is spoken as if said by himself in Person: viz. *He sent Messengers to Ahab, King of Israel, into the City, and said unto him* [not in Person, but by his Messengers] *thus saith Ben-hadad, &c. And the King of Israel answer'd and said, (to the Messengers) My Lord, O King, I am thine, &c.* because they represented the King. 1 *Kings* xx. 2, 4. The not attending to the Phrase of Scripture has been the Cause of all the Confusion about the divine Appellations, amongst the modern Writers in the Controversy of the Trinity; but the Ancients understood and distinguish'd them better.

THE next Text, which our Author mentions, is one which hath been much insisted on and little understood by the Defenders of Orthodoxy, falsely so call'd, viz. *Philip*. ii. 6, 7, 8. where he would have the *Form of God* to mean the *Essence* of God, (p. 168.) which is a Sense the Word never has in Scripture; and is here contradictory to v. 7. wherein it is said, that *Christ emptied himself*, or laid this *Form* aside, when he became Man; but it is impossible for God to lay aside his *Essence*. It means a *visible* Form or *Appearance*. *Mark* xvi. 12. and so it signifies every where in the Old Testament. See *Job* iv. 16. *Ez.* xliv. 13. *Dan.* iv. 33. v. 6, 9, 10. vii. 28. This being observ'd, 'tis easy to see the Apostle's Meaning in this Place, tho' his Expression in

v. 6.

v. 6. has something particular and difficult in it. He says then, that *Christ*, before his Incarnation, *was in the Form of God*, dwelling in the visible Glory that appear'd in the Tabernacle and Temple ; and by which he was seen and convers'd with the *Patriarchs* and *Moses* ; yet he who was in this *glorious Form* knew, that the still greater Glory and Honour to which the *Messias* was to be exalted, as the Reward of his Sufferings for the Redemption of Men, was not † (*ἀρπαγμὸν*) to be obtain'd as a Prize found by Chance, or without Difficulty and Labour, but by the greatest Humiliation and Obedience even unto Death : Therefore (v. 7.) *he emptied himself* (of this Form) *and took upon him the Form of a Servant* ; that is, he took an humane Body and dwelt in *Flesh*, instead of the *divine Glory*, that he might be capable of suffering Death, v. 8. and then was *highly exalted*, and had a Name given him which is above every Name, &c. v. 9. His having this Name given him which was that of *Son of God*, and was never given to any Angel, *Heb. i. 15.* and with it all Power both in Heaven and Earth, made him to be (*ἴσα θεῷ*) not equal (*ἴσος*) to God, but *like God*, by a personal divine Power and Authority invested in him, by being plac'd on God's heavenly *Throne*, *Rev. iii. 21.* and made *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords*, *Rev. xix. 16.* as the *only-begotten Son of God*.

† Ἀρπαγμα ἰσχύος, ἀλλ' ἀρετῆς ἀθλόν. *Greg. Naz. cont. Jul. Invect. 1.*

By this Explication you see, that the *Form of God* and *Form of a Servant* are an exact Antithesis to each other; the one a glorious, divine, and * *impassible* Form, the other a *passible* humane Form; the one a State of *angelical* Preeminence, the other of a *Servant*. I have been the larger in this Explication to put an End to the cavilling and weak Pretences of Men, and of this Author amongst the rest, who, without at all understanding the Text or Meaning of the Apostle, build a Notion upon it directly contrary to the Sense and Purport of it.

OUR Author goes on (p. 171.) to *Job. viii. 58. Before Abraham was, I am*; whence he would infer (p. 172.) *the eternal necessary Existence of Christ*. And this he infers from two parallel Expressions in the Greek of the old Testament: The one *Deut. xxxii. 39.* where it is said of God, *I am*; the other is *Psal. xc. 2.* spoken of God likewise, *viz. from everlasting to everlasting, (ὁ ὢν) Thou art*: Our Author in both Places supposes rightly the Word *God* to be understood. For in the first Text it is, *I am He*; i. e. He who alone is God, in Opposition to the false Gods mention'd immediately before: And in the latter it is, *from Everlasting to Everlasting Thou art He*; i. e. God, as the *Hebrew* has it. But how does

* *Impassibilis passibilis factus et verbum homo. Iren. lib. 3. c. 18.*

the parallel Expression of *Christ*, saying of himself, *before Abraham was I am*, prove *Christ* to be either *eternal* or *God*? God cannot be here understood as it is in the other Places, because he is not the Subject of the Context. The Texts, therefore, which our Author hath cited, had he attended rightly to the Parallel, would have led him to the true and only Sense of this, which should have been render'd more fully, *I am He*: Thus it is render'd in v. 24 and 28. of this Chapter; also in *ch. ix. v. 9. ch. xiii. v. 19.* of this Gospel. Had he consider'd this, he could not well have mis'd seeing, that the Expression (*ἐγώ εἰμι*) *I am*, here means, *I am He*, who is the *Christ* and Son of God; who had Existence before *Abraham*, and was first promis'd as the future *Seed of the Woman*, *Gen. iii. 15.* who should come in the Flesh *to bruise the Serpent's Head*, *i. e.* destroy his Power and the Dominion of Sin by the Redemption of Mankind; and whose *Day Abraham* afterwards foresaw, v. 56. God having promis'd him that he should arise out of his Seed, in whom *all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*. The whole preceding Part of the Chapter, from the 12th Verse, shews that our Saviour in his Discourse intended to inform the *Jews*, (without directly telling them) that he was the *Messias* and *Son of God*. Nothing can be more evident to one who will consider it: And the Expression (*ἐγώ εἰμι*) *I am*, has no Relation to the Name *Jehova*, which is

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express'd (*ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ αὐτός*) I A M that I A M ; and so has no Relation to *eternal necessary Existence*, as this Author would have it imply without any Colour or Ground of Reason whatsoever.

HE next proceeds to *Joh. x. 30. I and my Father are one*; which Words the Context shews are meant of the *Power* which God the Father had given *Christ* his Son, to save and finally reward his true Disciples: *I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish* (or not perish for ever) *neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand. My Father who gave them me is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand.* Then it follows, *I and my Father are ONE*, v. 28, 29, 30. that is plainly, they are *one* in *Power*, *Purpose*, and *Will*: The *Power* which the Son of God had of giving eternal Life and Happiness to his blameless and faithful Followers, whom he calls *his Sheep*, being the *Power* of God the Father committed to him, and which he exercis'd according to the *Will* of the Father, they were in this respect *ONE*: And so *Christ's* Sheep being in his Hand (or under his Care and Protection) or in the Hand of God his Father, was one and the same Thing. This is the Purport of our Saviour's Words. And agreeably to this Sense of Unity of *Power*, and *Will* and *Affection*, our Saviour pray'd to his Father that his Disciples to whom he had committed the *Power* of preaching the Gospel

Gospel to the World, as God had sent him into the World to teach it unto them, that they, and all those *who should believe in him thro' their Word, might be ONE, as he and the Father were ONE. Holy Father, keep thro' thine own Name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE, as we are — that they all may be ONE, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be ONE in us. — That they may be ONE, even as we are ONE.* Job. xvii. 11, 18, 20, 21, 22. In which Words our Saviour, if Men will hear him and be taught by him, hath plainly and fully explain'd the *Unity* betwixt him and his Father to be a moral Unity of *Power* and *Agreement* of *Mind* and *Will*, and not a metaphysical Unity of we know not what, or what is mere Contradiction. But, says this Author; *How it can be said of a Being that is infinitely below the supreme God, that he is one with him in Power, and yet their respective Powers be to each other as finite and infinite, is to me, I confess, incomprehensible; or how an infinite Being can communicate his Power to a Creature,* p. 173, 174. This Gentleman would make one believe he had no more Understanding than a Child, for that he cannot comprehend that God can communicate his Power to a Creature. Whose Power was it, thinks he, with which *Christ* promis'd his Apostles should be *endued from on high* [Luk. xxiv. 49. see *Act.* i. 8.] and by which they wrought all their Miracles? Was it their own natural Power, or was it not the *Power*

of God communicated to them? And it was the same Power, in an higher Degree, with which God *anointed his Son Jesus. Act. x. 38.* And as all supernatural Power communicated to Men must be not their own Power but the immediate Power of God, to deny this Communication possible, is plainly to deny the Possibility of *Prophecy* and *Miracles*, and all the Powers by which reveal'd Religion has been propagated. And as the Power of God rested on *Christ*, and the same Power was by him given to his Apostles, the Manifestation of this divine Power by them, according to the Will of God who communicated it to them, made them, as our Lord says, *to be ONE with Christ*, as he was ONE with the Father; and also ONE with the Father, as he was ONE with him. This is the plain Scripture Doctrine, and very easy to be comprehended. But if our Author means by God's Power, any Thing besides his relative Power exercis'd in the natural and moral Government of the World, and manifested in the various Revelations of his Will to Mankind; or means his metaphysical unoriginated infinite Power, and thinks *this* cannot be communicated; this is mere Quibble and Trifling much below a reasonable Man and a Scholar.

HE next alledges, that Christ is call'd *God*, to prove his *Supremacy*, *Independence*, and *necessary Existence*, which, he says, *the Name God* implies, p. 176, 177. If the Name
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of God imply'd this, it would hardly be given to Creatures, *Angels* and *Men*; and he cannot but know that the Name is given to these in Scripture. And if Christ himself had been the *supreme, independent, necessarily-existent God*, he undoubtedly would have had ascrib'd to him in the Scriptures the Titles of the *most high God, the one God, the only God, the only true God*; and would have been stil'd *God absolutely*: All which Titles are peculiarly ascrib'd to God the Father only, and even in Contradistinction to Christ his Son. Nor would Christ on the other hand have been call'd the *Angel of God, or the Son of God; the Only-begotten; the First-born of every Creature; the Image of God*: None of which Appellations can without the greatest Absurdity and Impiety be attributed to the *supreme, independent, unoriginated, or necessarily-existent God*, who is *the one God and Father of all, and above all*. Eph. iv. 6. This Author talks as if he had never consider'd the Scripture-Doctrine at all; or imagin'd that it taught, in Contradiction to itself and to natural Religion, *Tritheism* and *Polytheism*, two or more supreme Gods. I take no Notice of what he says from *Rom. ix. 5*. because whether the Word (*θεός*) *God* was originally in that Text or not, it does not appear to be spoken of Christ, but of God the Father: And if it was certainly in the Text of the Apostle, and meant by him of Christ, the precedent
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Observations shew that it is nothing to our Author's Purpose ; and he should have consider'd what has been often said upon this Text in a full and particular Manner, before he troubled his Readers with the stale confuted Pretences which he offers to them. p. 178, 179, 180. That Christ is *Lord of all*, and *blessed for ever*, is evident from Scripture ; and it is also as evident from the same Scripture that he is made Lord of all by the *Donation* and *Appointment* of God the Father, which this Author denies. Hear our Saviour himself ; *all Power is GIVEN to me both in Heaven and Earth*, Mat. xxviii. 18. and his Apostle *St. Paul*, Phil. ii. 9. *God hath highly exalted him, and GIVEN him a Name which is above every Name, &c.* and again, 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28. *He (God the Father) hath put all Things under his (Christ his Son's) Feet ; but when he saith all Things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all Things under him. And when all Things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be SUBJECT unto him that put all Things under him, that God (the Father, v. 24.) may be all in all.* Could this have been written, if Christ was the necessarily-existent, independent, supreme God over all ?

IN the same inconsiderate Manner he alleges the absolute *Omniscience* of Christ from Rev. ii. 23. because it is there said, that he *searcheth the Reins and Heart*. Who doubts this that believes

believes that *the Father hath committed all Judgment to the Son* ? But has not our Saviour himself told us ; that *the Father had put some Things in his own Power* ? Acts i. 7. And mention'd a particular Instance saying ; *of that Day and Hour knoweth no one, no not the Angels of Heaven (neither the Son, Mar. xiii. 32.) but my Father only* ? Mat. xxiv. 36. So that either here is an Exception to the Son's absolute Omniscience made by himself, or he is not *the Son*, but *the Father only*. This Text will for ever be too hard for all Metaphysicks to account for or explain, upon the Scheme of modern Orthodoxy. The Truth plainly is ; as Christ is the *Word* and *Wisdom* of God, and knows and has reveal'd the whole Will of God and Doctrine of Salvation, and *is made the Head over all Things to the Church*, Eph. i. 22. he cannot but know *all Things, even the most deep Things of God*, which relate to his Office in the Oeconomy of the Gospel. Therefore St. *John* calls his Book of *Apocalypse, the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God GAVE unto him*, ch. i. v. 1. But to suppose such Expressions to be Proofs of the absolute Omniscience of the supreme God, is like supposing Christians to be *omniscient*, because St. *John* tells them, *Ye have an Unction from the holy One, and ye know all Things*, 1 Epist. ii. 20. And it is to be really ignorant of the proper Proof both of *that* and the other divine Attributes : And the absolute

lute Omniscience of God the Father himself can be no otherwise prov'd than from his being the *one God and Father of all, who is above all*; and when this is either admitted or prov'd, his supreme and absolute divine Perfections follow of Course.

NOTHING need be said to what he pretends from *Heb. i. 10, &c.* because that Passage taken from the Psalmist is spoken of God the Father, *who created all Things by Jesus Christ*: And thus it is understood by all the Ancients; by *Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius*. See a Reply to Dr. *Waterland's Importance*, so call'd, and stil'd *Christian Liberty asserted, &c. p. 88, 89.*

I BELIEVE you are satisfy'd that what is already said sufficiently confutes this Author's Proposition, concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity. I shall therefore briefly observe, that with Regard to proving the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, he assumes wholly *without* or *against* the Evidence of Scripture, in every Thing which he offers. He thinks (*p. 183.*) *the Scriptures declare the Holy Spirit to be concern'd as an efficient Cause in the World's Formation.*

BUT, in truth, the Scriptures do not declare the Holy Spirit to be concern'd at all in the Creation of the World. *The Spirit of God which mov'd upon the Face of the Waters,*

ters, Gen. i. 2. was either a miraculous *Wind*, or the Power of God himself : And it is evident from the whole New Testament, that the *Word*, or Christ the Son of God, is the only Person *by whom* God created the World. Next, in order to prove the Spirit's *Immensify*, he alledges (p. 184.) a Passage out of Psalm cxxxix. 7. which is certainly spoken of the Person of the Lord Jehova himself, and of no other Person distinct from him, as the whole Context shews, 3dly, p. 186. he cites a Text or two which prove that the Gospel-Revelation is made to us *by the Spirit* 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. where the Spirit's *searching all Things, even the deep Things of God*, is in the immediately preceding Words explain'd, by the Mysteries of the Gospel being *reveal'd by the Spirit*. And it is certain that whatever he reveal'd, *he was taught of God*, and *receiv'd* from Christ, at whose Intercession he was sent and given from God the Father. *John* xv. 26. xvi. 7, 13, 14. Yet in direct Contradiction to these Declarations of Scripture this Gentleman says (p. 187.) *that a divine Person cannot be the Gift of God, as the Spirit is said to be*. But our Saviour says, that God our heavenly Father *will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him*. *Luk.* xi. 13. And of our Saviour it is said, *Joh.* iii. 34. *that God giveth not the Spirit by Measure unto him*; and this Spirit was given him, when *he descended like a Dove from Heaven*, and *lighted upon him*. *Mat.*

iii. 16. As sure, then, as God *gave* and *sent* his only-begotten Son to die for the Salvation of Mankind, so sure it is, that he *gave* and *sent* his holy Spirit to be a *Comforter* and *Sanctifier* of the Church of *Christ*, by his Energy and Communion. And that the Holy Ghost is subordinate to the *Son* as well as to the *Father*, is evident from his being call'd the *Spirit of the Son* as well as *of the Father*; from his being *sent* by the Son from the *Father*; and receiving his Power and Authority from the Son, and coming *in his Name*, by the Appointment of the *Father*, *Joh. xiv. 26.* Nor is the holy Spirit ever call'd *God* or *Lord*, as the Son is; or has *Glory* ascrib'd to him, as it is to the Son. He is never represented as having *Power* and *Dominion* given to him, as it is to the Son; or sitting upon a *Throne* and acting as a *King*, as the Son does: But his Office is merely *ministerial*; and his Divinity truly and properly consists in being the immediate *Inspirer* of the Prophets and Apostles; and the Builder, Supporter, and Sanctifier of the whole Church, by his miraculous Power and Gifts, and his continual divine Aid to and Communion with all true Believers in God and his *Christ*.

THUS I have consider'd every Thing which this Author has offer'd in Defence of his Notion of the Trinity, and have shewn, I hope, that it has not only no Foundation in Scripture, but is contradictory both to *Scripture*

ture and Reason. He endeavours to hide the apparent Absurdities of it, by pretending it to be incomprehensible; and useth some weak metaphysical Arguments to this Purpose: But if it was no more than a merely incomprehensible Doctrine, yet being an human Hypothesis and unscriptural Proposition, it can have no Pretence to be receiv'd, and may with Reason be rejected, as being unintelligible. But this is not the Case; and our Author's Proposition contains under it a Doctrine, which it is not difficult to understand and demonstrate to be opposite to, and subversive of, the primary fundamental Article both of natural and reveal'd Religion, *the Unity of God*; and by necessary Consequence also to take away the true and proper Divinity of *Christ*. And to all such who may be impos'd on by some philosophical Reasonings (tho' weak in themselves) which they do not understand, I would recommend what *St. Paul* says, *Coloss. ii. v. 8. Beware lest any Man spoil you thro' Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after CHRIST.*



A
L E T T E R
T O

The Rev. Dr. *Waterland*.

S I R,



R. *Sloss*, in his Volume of Sermons on the Doctrine of the Trinity, having throughout been grossly mislead by your *Oeconomy* (as you call it) of the Trinity, wherein you hold the three divine Persons to be each *necessarily-existent*, and equally *supreme* in Power, Dominion, and all divine Perfections ; and that the Subordination of the second and third Person to the first, which is set forth in the Gospel-Revelation, is only a seeming Subordination, not arising from any real Difference amongst the Persons in *Nature* or *Substance*, or any *essential*
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Properties, or from any *natural* Supremacy or Superiority of *the one God and Father of all, who is above all*, above the Son and Spirit ; but you think it is founded merely in a *Concert and Agreement* of three equally *supreme* Persons amongst themselves, inso-much that the *Father* himself (had it been so agreed) *might have acted the ministerial Part, and done all that the Son did* : I think it proper to recommend to your serious Consideration some Passages out of this Author, which he has drawn from, and which indeed I cannot help thinking to be true Consequences of, your Notion ; and which you as well as he ought to maintain, or else to give up your suppos'd *Oeconomy*, on which your whole System of Orthodoxy entirely depends.

MR. *Slofs* then says (Sermon xii. p. 272.)
 “ Some who are strenuous Asserters of the
 “ Equality of the Son with the Father, and
 “ of his Unity of Nature and Essence with
 “ him, yet explain that personal Distinc-
 “ tion between the Father and the Son, viz.
 “ BEGOTTEN, by the Father’s *communicat-*
 “ *ing* his Nature and Perfections to the Son ;
 “ but since that way of speaking gives great
 “ Handle to the Adversaries, and since, as we
 “ have shew’d, it infers the *Dependence* of
 “ the Son on the Father ; and indeed to
 “ draw it out to all its Consequences would
 “ degrade him to the Level of a *Creature* :
 “ I

“ I say, since that way of speaking has
 “ such *absurd* Consequences, it is much bet-
 “ ter not to attempt to explain the Genera-
 “ tion of the Son——than to do it by such
 “ Terms as COMMUNICATION or DERI-
 “ VATION of the divine Essence and Per-
 “ fections from the Father to the Son, or
 “ any of that kind which are inconsistent
 “ with the true Deity of the Son.” So that
Generation, explain’d by Origination or De-
 rivation or Communication of Substance from
 the Father, being according to this Author
 inconsistent with the true or supreme Deity
 of the Son, he every where asserts him to be
self-existent, unoriginated, and underiv’d, as
 God the Father himself is; and here plainly
 denies him to be *of* or *from the Father*,
 which is the *Athanasian* Explication of the
 Term *Begotten*. To this Purpose he spoke
 just before, p. 271. He adds (p. 277.)
 “ As this ‘personal Property of God the Son,
 “ whereby he is said to be *begotten* of the
 “ Father, cannot be understood in such a
 “ Sense as to import Inferiority to the Fa-
 “ ther in it; so neither is it to be so un-
 “ derstood, as if the Essence or Personality
 “ of the Son was COMMUNICATED or DE-
 “ RIV’D to him from the Father; this al-
 “ so would be inconsistent with all those
 “ Passages of Scripture, by which I have
 “ already prov’d his *supreme* Deity and *Self-*
 “ *existence*, both with Respect to his *Person*
 “ and Essence.—For to say (p. 278.) either
 “ that

“ that the Father COMMUNICATED or DE-
 “ RIV’D to the Son his Effence or *Persona-*
 “ *lity*, as I hinted above, is to degrade him
 “ to the Condition of a *Creature*: For a
 “ DERIV’d Being, or a *Person* who is not
 “ SELF-ORIGINATED, is just in other
 “ Words a *dependent Creature*.” He goes on;
 “ Besides let it be carefully minded that to
 “ suppose the Term *begotten*, by which the
 “ personal Property of the Son is describ’d,
 “ signifies and denotes that he *deriv’d* his
 “ Existence or *Personality* from the Father,
 “ is directly contrary to the known Prin-
 “ ciples of Philosophy and natural Reason:
 “ For it supposes that there is something
 “ DERIVATIVE and which is not *self-ex-*
 “ *istent* in the Deity; than which there can
 “ be nothing more repugnant to the natural
 “ and self-evident Notion and Conception,
 “ which Reason itself suggests to us, of true
 “ and proper Divinity: For if we exclude
 “ Self-existence and Independency out of our
 “ Notion and Conception of the Deity, we
 “ leave nothing in it whereby it is distin-
 “ guish’d from *created* Existence; or at least
 “ we exclude the chief Thing by which it
 “ is distinguish’d from it.” And he clincheth
 his Orthodoxy (*p.* 417.) saying, that in the
 Words of our Lord’s Prayer, *Our Father*
which art in Heaven &c. “ we are not to
 “ imagine that by the Term, *Father*, in that
 “ Directory the first Person of the Trinity
 “ only is understood, exclusive of the Son
 “ and

“ and Holy Ghost : For not only the first,
 “ and *second*, Person of the Trinity, but the
 “ *third* also, is *our Father who is in Hea-*
 “ *ven.*”

THIS, Sir, you see, is Mr. *Sloß's* Scheme of *Orthodoxy*, opposite to yours, (as you by many learned Distinctions explain it) and every other Scheme of *Orthodoxy*, but that of the old *Simonian Gnostics*, who with him held (*ἰπὲς ἀγενήτως*) *three unoriginated Persons*; which you know the primitive Christians always esteem'd *Tritheism*, *Blasphemy*, and *Impiety*: And it is not only utterly inconsistent with, and destructive of, the great fundamental Articles of natural and reveal'd Religion, the *Unity* of God and the *Mission* of *Christ*, but even outgoes *Athanasianism* itself. Nay, this Author rejects the Doctrine both of the *Athanasian* and *Nicene* Creeds, so call'd, in full and strong Terms, as dangerous and heretical. The *Athanasian* Creed teaches, that the *Son* is of (or from) *the Father alone* — *begotten*; again, that he is *God of* (or from) *the Substance of the Father*, *begotten before the Worlds*: And the *Nicene Creed* teaches, that *Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is begotten of* (or from) *his Father, before all Worlds*. In plain Contradiction to this Doctrine Mr. *Sloß* maintains, that the *Son* (and so he speaks of the *Spirit*) is self-originated and self-existent; *i. e.* according to the Sense of the *Athanasian* Creed, is of NONE, *neither created nor be-*
 gotten,

gotten, which is the essential distinguishing Property of God the Father in that Creed. But he goes farther and says, as I have observ'd, that to say the *Personality* of the Son was communicated to him *from the Father*, or to say that he is not SELF-ORIGINATED, *i. e.* to say that he is *of the Father*, or *God of God*, is to degrade him to the Condition of a *Creature*; is to make him a *dependent Creature*. Thus this weak and presumptuous Man, tho' he has taken you for his Guide, has outstretch'd the utmost Lengths of your Orthodoxy; and condemns your Explication of the Generation of the Son, as being (you own) *originated and dependent on the Father, as being of him and from him, and refer'd up to him**. All this Mr. *Sloß* chargeth with Heresy, as making the Son a *dependent Creature*; nor will he hear of the Term *Begotten* being explain'd in any other Sense than being *unoriginated*, and *self-originated, self-existent, i. e.* as all Mankind understand it, UNBEGOTTEN: And he insists, that you and others by your Explication have given great Handle to Heretics, to prove thereby the Son to be not *self-existent* or *unoriginated*, but *begotten* or *deriv'd* of and from the Father, and consequently *dependent* upon the Father for his Personality or Origination, and all his divine Perfections.

* *Dr. Waterland's farther Vindication &c. p. 31, 79.*

THIS Orthodoxy of Mr. *Slofs* is entirely founded upon your Scheme of the *Oeconomy*, and therefore how far you are to answer for it, it behoves you seriously to consider. You see plainly that it is capable of the most gross irreligious Sense, and has in Fact been made a very evil and impious Use of. And if this Author's Orthodoxy, antichristian and irreligious as it is, is the real and true Consequence of your Notion, and if you see that it is so, you will be oblig'd ingenuously to own it; and either to maintain it as this Author has done, or else to recant and give it up, if it cannot be maintain'd by you. You see, if Mr. *Slofs* understands you, that your *Oeconomy* of the divine Persons, on which all your Orthodoxy depends, is quite opposite to *Athanasian* Orthodoxy, which ever supposes and professeth at least the *Son* to be really and properly *begotten*, *i. e.* to be *of and from the Father*; and constantly denies that he is *self-existent* or *unoriginated*; as you in your Writings frequently and expressly deny also, with even a Resentment towards your Opponents (who thought it the necessary Consequence of your *Oeconomy*) as misrepresenting you and using you unfairly. You therefore say in Opposition to Mr. *Slofs*, in your *farther Vindication*, p. 31. and *second Defence*, p. 207. that *two unoriginate divine Persons, however otherwise inseparable, would be two Gods according to the Ancients*. Agreeably you say again in your *farther Vindication*, p.

38. *the Originateness of the one (the Son) and Unoriginateness of the other (the Father) is natural, that is, necessary or unalterable, and eternally so.* Nay you allow (p. 34.) "That by Vertue of the Text 1 Cor. viii. 6. the Son is excluded from being God in that EMINENT Manner, that UNORIGINATE Manner, that the Father is." Once more (p. 79.) you say, "God the Son is *dependent* on the Father, as being OF HIM and FROM HIM, and refer'd up to him." This your Adversaries think makes for them in fair Construction; and so does Mr. *Slofs*; but you think it consistent with the Son's being *necessarily-existent* and supreme God, and can distinguish between *necessary-existence* and *self-existence*, tho' they are evidently the same Idea: But Mr. *Slofs* your Friend and Disciple, for want of your Art of distinguishing, can see no Difference between the one and the other, and thinks they equally mean *unoriginated* and *underiv'd* as your Adversaries do; and so insists in Opposition both to you and them, that the Son and Spirit are equally with the Father *unoriginated, independent, self-originated, self-existent*, and to complete their Characters, are *Our Father who is in Heaven*. Yet, as I have before observ'd, Mr. *Slofs*'s Notion is only the Consequence which he has drawn from your *Oeconomy*. You saw such Consequence was shocking to Orthodoxy as well as to Christianity, and therefore have hitherto deny'd it. Mr. *Slofs* saw and owns it,

it, but is too weak and wants your Sense to see how fatal it is to *Athanasianism*, and directly concludes in *Tritheism*.

THE World justly expects your serious and open Declaration in the Case, to shew that the Consequences this Man has drawn from your Plan of Orthodoxy and Oeconomy are not right; or if they are, that you will either maintain them, or give up your Scheme. If you give it up, you will thereby happily heal a great and dangerous Wound which you have long given [tho' without designing it] to *Christianity* and *natural Religion*. But if you shall defend it with this Author, then it will appear that Opposition to the great fundamental Articles of *natural* and *reveald* Religion, the UNITY of God, and the MISSION of *Christ*, is carried as far as it is possible:

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